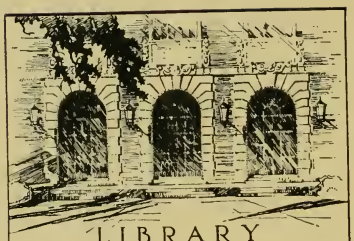

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THE

Church and the Universities.

A LETTER

TO

C. S. ROUNDELL, ESQ.

M.P. FOR GRANTHAM.

BY

JOHN WORDSWORTH, M.A.

TUTOR AND FORMERLY FELLOW OF BRASENOSE COLLEGE, OXFORD;
AND CHAPLAIN TO THE BISHOP OF LINCOLN.

Re-issued with Postscript.

Oxford,
AND 6, SOUTHAMPTON-STREET, STRAND, LONDON:
PARKER AND CO.
1880.

MEMORANDUM.

The reader is requested to refer from the letter to the Postscript in the following passages:—

P. 5, last paragraph, cp. p. 24.

P. 11, l. 2, dele 'tender,' and cp. p. 25.

P. 17, bottom, cp. p. 27, foll.

P. 18, l. 9, cp. p. 27.

P. 22, l. 14, cp. p. 28, foll.

From the Author.

Brasenose College, Oxford,
Nov. 5, 1880.

Dear Mr. Roundell,

You will not, I think, be surprised, nor, I hope, displeased, at my writing to you on the very important subject of the "Church and the Universities," especially in connection with this University. You have appeared in your place in Parliament as the spokesman of the Oxford Liberals on this subject, and you have since published your speech made on July 9th, with an Appendix of petitions in favour of the abolition of clerical restrictions in the Universities[a]. You will remember that when I had the pleasure of meeting you at Riseholme, we touched once or twice on the subject of your motion; and I am much obliged to you for the copy of your speech which you have since been kind enough to send me. Differing widely as I do from you on this question, I gladly welcome the assurance that you are anxious not only for the welfare of religion in Oxford, but also for the permanence therein of the religious teaching of the Church of England, of which we are members.

With this short preface I will pass at once, by your leave, to criticize the programme of the Oxford

[a] *Clerical Fellowships and Headships at the Universities:* a Speech delivered in the House of Commons, Friday, July 9, 1880, by Charles S. Roundell, M.P. for Grantham; late Fellow of Merton College, Oxford. (London: Cornelius Buck, 22, Paternoster-row, E.C., 1880.)

"Liberals," and their representatives in Parliament, for disconnecting the Church from the Universities. It contains, if I am rightly informed, three main items:—

I. The abolition of clerical restrictions upon Fellowships or Headships.

II. The introduction of "lay" teaching of theology.

III. The substitution of lay for Episcopal Visitors.

You have not, as far as I am aware, expressed a definite opinion on the last head, but it is no doubt a strong point with many of those with whom you act. The first was the subject of your motion, and the second is incidentally insisted upon in your speech, and has been particularly pressed by Professor Bryce. Will you permit me to say a few words on each of these points in order?

I. The Abolition of Clerical restrictions for Fellowships and Headships.

This, which is the main topic of your speech, must also be the main subject of my letter. In order to give your arguments a thorough consideration, I have numbered them as follows, very nearly in the order in which they occur in your speech:—

(1.) That the Universities are national institutions, and ought not to be the property of any particular Church or sect.

(2.) That it would be a very shocking thing if there should be a clerical majority at Christ Church, or in those other Colleges in which it is supposed a larger number of clerical Fellows will be retained by the Commission.

(3.) That clerical Heads and Fellows are likely to be intellectually inferior, and ought not to be

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exposed to the danger of being bribed into taking Holy Orders.

(4.) That the Colleges have ceased to be "clerical seminaries," and therefore there is less need for such Fellowships.

(5.) That parents do not care for their sons to be educated by clergymen.

(6.) That men of strong religious feeling will in the future take Holy Orders without obligation.

(7.) That a change is inevitable, and very few Fellows of Colleges in future will take Holy Orders.

It will, I think, be convenient to take the last of these propositions at once. Your attention has, I think, been already drawn to the inconsistency between the arguments which I have numbered *sixth* and *seventh*. I will not, however, take a rhetorical advantage of it. I believe that in the first case your wishes make you hopeful for the Church, and in the second your reason leads you in another direction: and I will frankly say that I partly agree with both. I believe with you (No. 6) that in the future many men will be found desirous of taking Holy Orders in the Universities, and perhaps men of as high character as formerly; but I agree also with you (No. 7) that it is very unlikely that they will obtain positions in any large numbers on the governing bodies of Colleges. It seems to be generally agreed that the feeling against "clericalism" is becoming somewhat bitter amongst Oxford Liberals. If I remember rightly, Professor Bryce, at a public meeting of his constituents of the Tower Hamlets (not perhaps specially good judges of such things), described Oxford much as if a kind of Jesuitism was rampant among us, and the Inquisition in full swing.

Others of the party seem to have spoken, in less public gatherings, as if free-thought was obliged to creep about in holes and corners, trembling lest the clutch of the Anglican priesthood should be felt upon its throat at every turn. Some one, I believe, has printed the statement that Oxford is governed by a "clerical ring." I do not think that those who seem to be pointed at in these descriptions have either given occasion to, or generally reciprocate, such bitter feelings, nor do I think they are really so common as some gloomy spirits would make out. Some allowance, indeed, must be made (as in the case of Professor Bryce) for the heated political atmosphere of the past session. And amongst ourselves in Oxford, a certain juvenile exuberance of feeling and language often lasts on into mature life amongst those who know little of the world, and so fail to see facts in their due proportions. But, however superficial it may be, I am afraid that the fear of "clericalism" is a fact among us, and is likely to prejudice the elections to Fellowships, perhaps for some time to come. Experience certainly seems to shew that where the number of clerical Fellows has been reduced to a fixed and necessary minimum, that minimum has tended to become the actual maximum. And as the divergence of opinion inside a College grows stronger, men holding "erroneous and strange doctrines" are not likely to be inclined to admit those into partnership who have taken, or will take, a vow at their ordination to banish and drive away such doctrines. Nothing breaks up the comfort and quiet of a Common Room so much as religious controversy of a serious character; and, therefore, the love of ease, which is one of the strongest, because

the most secret of the passions of our nature, will, in their case, be enlisted against the clerical interest.

For these reasons, I agree with your final conclusion that the "set of the tide" is against the clerical element amongst our Fellows. But I venture to dissent from your view that it is useless to struggle against it, even when illustrated by the humorous image you have suggested. To the Christian, nothing is inevitable but the triumph of God's good pleasure. We have had far too much lately of this fatalism in politics. It is usually either a poor substitute for argument in favour of something which we wish to happen, or a poor excuse for languid resistance to what we feel we ought not to wish to happen. But surely politicians of all classes, Liberals quite as much as Conservatives, are pledged to a very different principle, viz. to what the fatalists call, "making men moral by Acts of Parliament." If I told a large number of Liberals that drunkenness was inevitable, and Sunday closing was no use as a barrier against the tide of intemperance, they would think me no true lover of my country. And so I venture to think that they are no true friends of the Church who give up her external safeguards, because they think that secularism is inevitable. When a man acts according to reason and conscience we respect him, whatever his opinion, because we believe that the fairest and most beneficial results are attained by an honest conflict of wills, directed by a love of truth and justice. But when a man talks of the inevitable, he appears to be shirking his proper contribution of force to the settlement of a question. Of course, a change is inevitable, if those whose conscience bids

them resist it, weakly neglect to do so; but if they resist, the result which follows will at least be modified by the force with which they meet it.

The true policy, then, is to decide what is desirable, and then to legislate regardless of "the great Atlantic Ocean," or any such terrors. If clerical Fellowships and Headships are unreasonable and immoral, let them be swept away; but if there is good reason for their existence, the dislike of a certain party is no valid argument for their abolition. Let us, then, go on to consider the positive as opposed to the prophetical arguments as they stand in your speech, which may no doubt be taken as offering a good summary of the opinions which I am combating.

In the first place, we are told "that the national Universities ought not to be the property of any particular Church or sect, but the property of the nation." There would be a certain force in this (though it would by no means be conclusive) if the Church of England were disestablished. But when you conclude by moving that the House recognizes the obligation to the fulfilment of Sections 5 and 6 of the "Universities Tests Act, 1871," which require provision to be made for religious instruction in the principles of the Church of England within the Colleges, and for morning and evening prayer according to the Prayer-book in their chapels, you shew that there is a certain right of property recognized as belonging to the English Church in *parts* of the University, even by that Act which you appeal to as stamping it with a "national" character. Yet in the body of your speech you assume that the idea of "nationality" which you attach to the University, may be applied without any reservation to individual

Colleges, as if the University and the Colleges were synonymous terms. But if they were synonymous, and your idea of nationality were the true one, you could not without grave inconsistency move the retention of Church teaching and Church services in the Colleges. If this does not injure the national character of the University, certainly the predominance of the Church in three or four Colleges cannot do so.

But apart from this, it is obvious that there is a fallacy underlying this word "national." The nation is by no means unanimous on the subject of education, but is composed, as we are all aware, of two great parties, perhaps nearly equal in political strength when the question is fairly before them. One desires "denominational" education, while the other prefers to limit State grants to secular schools. No doubt the Liberal party is on the whole inclined to the latter course. But this is by no means universally the case even among them, and there is certainly nothing in principle to prevent Liberals from supporting denominational education with grants of public money. But when the funds are those of existing corporations which it is proposed to appropriate, it seems absurd to talk as if any generally recognized principle required that they should be diverted to a system of secular instruction or endowment. Our contention is, that existing clerical Fellowships and Headships are benefices in the possession of the Church of England, which are rightly and justly the property of the national Church; and that their retention is not only an act of justice to that Church, but contributes to the national character of the Universities. If half (and I believe more than

half) of the educated people in England are in favour of denominational education, is it not right that the Church should have at least its portion amongst the Colleges secured to it by the only means now possible, namely, by leaving intact this connection with the clerical body? For I need not remind you that the ordination vows are the only tests now recognized in the older Colleges; and the "layman," in the true sense of the word, i.e. the lay Churchman, has become extinct as far as Statutes can make it.

Let me, then, for the sake of clearness, take the case of Christ Church, on which you lay most stress, and which is also the most important. Nor can I omit saying that whilst I have been writing this letter, I am informed that a change in the *personnel* of the Commission has enabled the Liberal party upon it to alter the printed drafts of Statutes which had been provisionally agreed upon, and to reduce the clerical Fellows at one or two of the Colleges you name to a very bare minimum. This is I presume legal; but it hardly sounds wise or equitable to re-open the discussion of a principle, when it was supposed that only details would be questioned. It is hardly what was to be expected from a body of persons of so high a character and dignified a position. To act in this way, is to encourage and even invite a bitter party strife and retaliation.

Let us, then, take the case of Christ Church. I confess I cannot read your appeal to old members of that house without a smile. "Shall Christ Church, shall Wolsey's great foundation, be the first College in a great University, or a mere appanage of the Church of England?" And Professor Bryce, who bids us pity the poor Liberal members in such a

College, "handed over, bound hand and foot, to the tender mercies of a clerical majority," must, I think, have smiled to himself, when he uttered those moving phrases before the Liberation Society[b]. There is not, I suppose, a College in the University where free-thought is freer than at Christ Church, or where the clerical members are found ranging so readily on the Liberal side—and this, when there is certainly some provocation to act otherwise. But if it were not so, is the Church of England so poverty-stricken that it cannot be trusted to do for one College in the future what it has done for about forty in the past, and supply it with the life suitable to a great foundation? You have thought fit publicly to censure that Society as one of the "least efficient" of the Colleges of Oxford. It would ill become me to step forward as a champion of men whose high character and devotion to duty puts many of us to shame. But I would beg respectfully to record my dissent from your judgment, and I can hardly express my meaning more plainly than by saying, that I would sooner send a young man in whom I was interested to Christ Church, than to almost any College in Oxford. If it does not altogether rise to the ideal standard (and I know no College which does), it is certainly not for lack of free-thought. I would rather say that the inevitable want of sympathy on some very deep matters, amongst members of its tutorial staff, was a real and unfortunate source of weakness. But the comparative failure of the most sedulous teaching of such a body of young men as that which fills Christ Church, results chiefly from the home-life and habits of thought of our

[b] *Guardian*, June 2, 1880, p. 707, from the *Nonconformist*.

upper classes, which are not favourable to study, though they generally produce a mixture of manliness and modesty which might be dearly exchanged for many more showy qualities. If you would appeal to fathers of Christ Church men to give their sons a higher idea of the value of hard work, you would be doing greater service, than by drawing a sad picture of "Wolsey's great foundation" becoming a "mere appanage of the Church of England."

Is it not rather more natural to ask, Shall the Church of Hooker, Laud and Sanderson, of Butler, Bingham and Berkeley, of Keble and Mozley—to name but a few of our honoured dead—be denied a settled home in that University of which she has been so long the mother and the mistress? Is not Christ Church, in fact, marked out by its possession of the Cathedral, and by its Dean and Professorial Canons, to be, among other things, a chief theological school of the Church amongst us? Here I touch upon another of your arguments (No. 4), that the Colleges have ceased to be "clerical seminaries," and therefore that it is "an anachronism" to provide for the training of the clergy in them. It is strange to hear such language from a man of culture, who no doubt desires that the clergy should be able to hold their own with men of other professions. The Colleges have, in fact, never been "clerical seminaries," but men destined for the service of the State have been hitherto educated side by side with candidates for Orders, to the general advantage of both. It is true that a large number of the latter are now educated perforce elsewhere, but I have calculated that, at any time for about ten years back, some 550 of our undergraduates,

or considerably more than a fifth of the whole body in residence, were *bona fide* candidates for ordination[c]. I may further remark, that in my own College (Brasenose) about *four-ninths* of our graduates have been ordained during the same period. And I see no reason to think that, unless they are positively discouraged, these numbers will decrease. But surely it is the part of a statesman to encourage this connection between the clergy and the Universities, which is one of our "national" peculiarities of the greatest value. The high position assured to the ministers of our Church, and their insight into the life and modes of thought of other young men, secures them an influence not possessed by the clergy of other nations. No thoughtful man can look without pain upon the low intellectual position of many of the clergy in Roman Catholic countries, or on the arid theology of Protestant Germany (chiefly under the teaching of lay Professors), which has little or no bearing on personal religion. From our Universities, on the contrary, a stream of men is constantly going forth, who are at once cultivated and devout. How long we shall possess this privilege depends much upon present legislation. But of one thing I am certain, that if the action of this Commission or of Parliament causes this flow to cease, the whole of English society will suffer, and the historian of the future will marvel at the blindness of those states-

[c] The total of Oxford graduates ordained between 1868—1877 was 1,526, or 152·6 a-year. Taking their average residence at $3\frac{1}{2}$ years, which is a low standard, I calculate that 534 ($152{\cdot}6 \times 3{\cdot}5$) of the ordained graduates were in residence together. The remainder (16) is made up of undergraduates, who are ordained in certain numbers every year, generally after residence at a Theological College.

men, who, to gratify party feeling, sacrificed a national blessing of unique and priceless value.

But you say, "It appears to me to be an invidious thing, and partaking of the nature of a bribe, to select a man of inferior abilities because he is willing to take Holy Orders, and to reject a man of superior abilities because he is unwilling to take Orders." It is difficult for one who is a clergyman to answer this objection; but I can at least say that I know of no case in my own generation in which the opportunity of a clerical Fellowship has even *seemed* to act as a bribe. Some over-sensitive consciences may have been pained by the thought that their clerical profession had helped them to gain a Fellowship on more easy terms than others of their contemporaries; and I believe that the wish to save others from a like misgiving has led several persons in Oxford to sign the petition, which you print in your appendix, or others like it. The estimate of abilities is not very easy; but those who have experience will, I think, inform you that the papers done in examination by candidates for clerical Fellowships are generally scarcely, if at all, distinguishable from those done in competition for open Fellowships.

This, you will perhaps say, is chiefly matter of opinion. But, above and beyond that, there are three things which may fairly be asserted on this point:—

1. The two men you are supposed to compare are not candidates for the same office, and ought not properly to be examined together. The clerical candidate is, in my view of the case, desirous of obtaining a cure of souls, with certain other duties of a devotional and religious character analogous to those

performed by the Canons of our Cathedrals. It is as unreasonable to elect a man to this office *merely* because of his superior abilities in examination, as it would be to put up a Canonry of St. Paul's, or the Vicarage of Leeds, to open competition amongst men of all professions. And further, so dissatisfied are the most advanced "Liberals" among us with the merely competitive system of filling responsible posts, whether lay or clerical, that there is, I suppose, no College which has not taken powers under this Commission to elect to tutorial or official Fellowships without examination. And so important is this change thought to be, that many elections have already been made under this system.

2. In any comparison of intellectual attainments, it is not fair to omit all consideration of the theological study required of candidates for ordination. I have now been Examining Chaplain to a Bishop for a good many years, and I am sure that the average knowledge acquired by those who are ordained to ordinary cures, has taken them no little time and labour to attain. This is surely much more the case in the higher sphere of Oxford. These are not days when a man who stands for a clerical Fellowship does so lightly, and without preparation. Such a determination implies no slight mental and moral strain, from which the candidate for an open Fellowship is entirely free. And yet in how few examinations is Theology recognized even by one paper!

3. The clerical tutor has the great advantage of a fixed principle of authority on which to rest in the past, and a steady light of hope in the future. He is decidedly an "improvable" person. He does not

generally fall into self-centred indolence or melancholy, which is a pressing danger of academic life. He relies upon divine grace to help him; and he sees in each of his pupils a soul for whom Christ died and rose again. This is no slight advantage. It gives him a power of dealing with the moral difficulties of his pupils which others do not possess; it gives him an increased courage in speaking to them, and a consciousness of pastoral duty which is, to say the least, rarer in lay tutors. I know some of these last who feel it, and respect them highly; but I should be shocked at any clerical tutor who did not look upon his office in the light of his ordination vow.

Later on in your speech you throw doubt upon the supposition that parents care for their sons to be educated by clergymen, or for the guarantees which we are seeking to acquire in regard to certain Colleges, and particularly, I suppose, in the matter of Headships. You quote the cases of Eton, Harrow, Westminster, Rugby, and Charterhouse, the headmasters of which *may* be laymen. But have they ever been so in recent years? Surely it is only quite lately that the Statutes of most of these schools have been altered in a way to dissociate them to some extent from the Church, and we have yet to experience the result of those changes. But if you ask for real facts, I can only inform you that at the matriculation examination lately held at Keble College, upwards of *sixty* candidates presented themselves for admission, although the Warden's lists had been closed for more than a year, and many applications had been declined. And I know by many private letters and conversations how seriously many parents

do think of this subject. Of course, as long as matters are outwardly much the same among us, the mass of parents will not move; but there is, I am persuaded, much more anxiety latent amongst them than you seem to imagine.

II. The Lay teaching of Theology.

If by a "layman" is meant a member of the Church of England, licensed by proper Church authority to teach, there would be no great controversy on the subject, except as to the extent to which such teaching should be employed. While deprecating a change in the Professorships of Theology, we should not be sorry to see properly qualified lay-tutors taking their part in College teaching.

We are most of us familiar with the fact that the happiest and most successful part of Origen's career was as a lay-teacher of theology in the catechetical school of Alexandria. And my late and revered master, the present Bishop of Salisbury, has given an interesting list of lay-theologians (not, perhaps, absolutely certain in details) at the end of his well-known Bampton Lectures. But is this what you and Professor Bryce mean, when you propose that the chairs of Hebrew and Ecclesiastical History should be open to laymen? Obviously not: for you at once cite the case of a distinguished Presbyterian minister (if he still remains one) who would, you suppose, worthily fill the Hebrew chair. And Professor Bryce goes so far as to assert that "it ought to be, if not a positive disqualification, at any rate a disadvantage, to a man who stands for a chair of that kind [viz. Ecclesiastical History], to

be a clergyman of any religious body;" an assertion received with the cheers of his audience [d].

Now, to go into the merits of this last argument would take longer than would be advisable at this moment. It touches, in fact, the root of the great question, "Is there, or is there not, such a thing as revealed truth committed to the Church?" If there is not, surely it is reasonable to aim still further at impartiality than the exclusion of clergymen, which Professor Bryce desires; and to enact that none but persons perfectly indifferent to the truth or falsehood of religion need apply for this chair. Perhaps it would be a little harsh to require a solemn profession of atheism in days when dogma of all kinds is so distasteful to some; but an abjuration of all special interest in theological controversies might not be out of place in order to secure perfect scientific candour.

But if there is such a thing as revealed truth, surely one who speaks with the responsibility of a clergyman ought to be chosen to instruct the future clergy of our Church in the exegesis of the Old Testament, and the history of the kingdom of God.

For my own part, when I read the New Testament, and note with what wonderful care our Lord educated His Apostles, and especially how He opened their understandings that they might understand the Scriptures, and explained to them privately the parables of the Kingdom, and gave to His beloved disciple the Visions of the Isle of Patmos, I can draw no other conclusion than that He was educating a band of educators, whose function He desired to continue in His Church. A knowledge of these two

[d] *Guardian*, ut supra, p. 707.

subjects seems to have been specially provided for in the foundation of the Christian ministry. And even those who do not take the same view of this topic as ourselves will admit that the accredited ministers of a religion are the natural persons to explain its Scriptures, and to shew the meaning and relevancy of the currents of religious thought and controversy, and the social movements which make up its history. A merely philological knowledge of the Bible and a positivist view of Church history is worse than useless to a clergyman. You remember, perhaps, Schiller's words:—

> "Der allein besitzt die Musen,
> Der sie trägt im warmen Busen;
> Dem Vandalen sind sie Stein[e]."

If there are cases more than any others in which, according to the old saying, "Pectus facit theologum," it is in these studies. And I fear I must again draw your attention to the fact that the Christian layman is now unknown to our Statutes, and that unless you appoint a clergyman you have no security for the character of the teaching delivered from the professorial chair.

At the same time, I am glad to be assured that the proposal does not go beyond the two Professorships named, and I will close this part of the subject by expressing a hope that maturer consideration will lead you to recall your assent to this part at least of the destructive programme.

III. The substitution of Lay for Episcopal Visitors.

I will add but a few words on this subject, on which you do not touch, and on which my informa-

[e] "Die Antiken zu Paris." *Gedichte*, p. 395.

tion is not so precise. It is reported, however, that an attempt will be made in other cases besides that of Lincoln College, to transfer the Visitatorial power from those Bishops who exercise it to some lay authority, probably in most cases the Lord Chancellor. At present, as you are aware, of our *twenty-one* Colleges only *six* are definitely under Lay Visitors, while *fifteen* are under nine different Archbishops and Bishops of the Church of England[f]. These Bishops usually represent the actual successors of our founders, or were chosen by those founders as most likely to carry out their intentions. It is not surprising that a revolution such as is at present in progress, the whole aim of which seems to be to reduce the Colleges to a uniform level, with no respect whatever to the particular wishes of Founders, should aim at uniformity also in this respect. The poetry of historical associations, the ties of gratitude, the pleasant and beneficial interest of such a connection, proved again and again, the easy and costless termination of disputes—all this goes for nothing with those who are in love with a colourless uniformity.

I do not know whether it is proposed that the Earl of Pembroke at Jesus College, and the Chancellor of the University at Pembroke and Hertford Colleges, should also be despoiled of their rights. Possibly not, as they have not the disadvantage of episcopal character. But if this change is carried out in regard to clerical Visitors, I venture to think that not only will great injustice be done to the prelates

[f] Balliol College elects its own Visitor, but on the last occasion elected the present Bishop of London, then Bishop of Lincoln. Worcester College is under the Bishops of Oxford and Worcester and the Vice-Chancellor of the University.

in question, and through them to the Church of England, but that the Colleges themselves will suffer in a very obvious manner. Instead of carrying their disputes before a friend, bound to them by personal interest and religious sentiment, sympathizing with the special needs and circumstances of the foundation under his care, and having a special knowledge of its history, they will carry their case before an over-worked judge, changing with every Ministry, who will possibly treat them as litigants, and involve them in heavy charges and disagreeable delays, and certainly will not be able to give them the peculiar individual attention which they have been used to receive. These are not days of high-handed Bishops straining the law, or deciding off-hand after reading a page of Blackstone. No one can doubt that a legal question of any complexity will be submitted by College Visitors to competent legal authority; and if there may be danger of an occasional error of judgment, such a contingency is better than the certain loss which will ensue under the supposed alteration.

Should the change, however, be resolved upon in some cases, and the Bishops be no longer allowed a voice in secular matters, I would entreat you and others who may be influential in directing the settlement of this question, to retain for the Bishops, who are at present Visitors, their jurisdiction in *spiritual* things, such e.g. as the Chapel services. But should this act of justice also be refused (which I hope is not likely to be the case) we must trust to the love of uniformity, and the sense of order in our legislators, to secure proper Episcopal supervision of some kind for the religious life of our Colleges as far as it

continues to exist. The Archbishop of Canterbury has, I believe, such an inherent jurisdiction, and the Bishop of Oxford seems also to have his natural rights, if those of others lapse. But on this point I will not enter further, trusting that the attachment of the Colleges to the present system will be sufficiently strong to avert in most cases the necessity for discussing it.

I must now close this letter, which, I fear, has already taxed your patience too far. There are many things I could wish to have said further on the general subject, particularly on its historical side. I should like to have cited the charters and foundation statutes of many of our Colleges, such e.g. as Exeter, Lincoln, and Brasenose, which were intended to be, and have long continued to be, Colleges of Priests: Lincoln College was, as you are perhaps aware, a regular Collegiate Church. Its Fellows, I believe, still have assigned to them a stall in the choir of All Saints Church, and their meetings are called Chapters. But all these ancient religious communities, of a type which seems specially suited to the English character, and to the religious wants of the present day, at home and abroad, are to be secularised by the present Commission[g]. Possibly there were too many of them for the present conditions of study. But it is a very harsh and inequitable measure to sweep all away, because the claims of other interests make it seem equitable to disturb their exclusive possession. You may say that the Church is free to found new Colleges of its own; and Keble and Hertford are

[g] The Oxford Mission to Calcutta, just formed, is moulded on this type of community.

certainly wonderful examples of the power of religious principle in generous-hearted Churchmen. Facts, indeed, seem to shew that the demand for religious education has hardly ever been stronger than it is at present. But new foundations cannot take the place of the old, which are in possession of the ground both morally and physically. It is almost impossible to find a site within the town of Oxford for a new College, and it is very doubtful whether a Parliament like the present would ratify a charter to such a body, even if Her Majesty's Ministers advised that one should be granted. And even if liberal principles so far prevailed over party feeling as to make new foundations as easy as they ought to be, we could not acquire the prestige and historical associations of four or five hundred years, which lend such a charm and power to our old foundations. No! if the Church of England is worth preserving; if the peculiar elements of our national character are worth preserving; wisdom and justice and statesmanship alike cry out that a definite home and habitation should be assigned to her within the walls of some, at least, of our ancient Colleges.

Believe me, dear Mr. Roundell,
Very faithfully yours,
JOHN WORDSWORTH.

POSTSCRIPT.

Oxford,
Dec. 14, 1880.

Dear Mr. Roundell,

Since the publication of my letter, I have received criticisms upon it, as to matters of fact, from Mr. Bryce, Professor of Civil Law, and M.P. for the Tower Hamlets, and Mr. Ingram Bywater of Exeter College, both of which call for an answer. This must be my excuse for troubling you with the following Postscript. I am particularly anxious that the cause which I have so deeply at heart should not be injured by the suspicion of exaggeration or unfairness—a feeling in which I know that I shall have your sympathy.

Mr. Bryce objects to the reference to himself on p. 5 as a misrepresentation, and corrects those on pp. 17 and 18. There is also a difference of opinion between us as to his words quoted on p. 11.

With regard to p. 5, he informs me that he cannot recall any speech of his to his constituents with regard to the University (letter of Dec. 6). He adds, that he has frequently had occasion (as I understand in private conversations) to declare such a notion of the present state of the University as I attribute to him, though it is one which is not wholly extinct in some quarters, to be far removed from the truth (letter of Nov. 29). In another letter (dated Dec. 2), he calls it "a description of Oxford ridiculously unlike the truth."

To this I would reply that my representation of

his opinions was made (as I distinctly implied) from memory, and that the obnoxious words were qualified by phrases which shewed that they were not to be taken literally. I naturally did not mean that he *spoke* of Jesuitism and the Inquisition, but that he seemed to regard the clergy of Oxford as artful and oppressive. No one can be more rejoiced than I am to find that I have mistaken his opinion. Unfortunately (as I think for both of us) I cannot now, with such partial search as I have been able to make, lay my hands upon the report which I had in mind, and I therefore willingly withdraw the paragraph with an expression of sincere regret for having brought forward a charge against him which I cannot substantiate. It was due to his position, and to the good customs of Oxford life, to have verified my recollection before publishing my letter. My memory, after an interval of five or six months, may have played me false as to the strength of his language, or as to the audience before whom he spoke, or as to both of these points; and the report which I read may have been an exaggeration of what he really uttered. Whatever may have been the case with regard to myself, it is of far more importance to my readers to know that Mr. Bryce repudiates such a view of the internal state of Oxford, as I quite innocently, but incorrectly, attributed to him.

There is also a difference of opinion between us as to his words quoted on p. 11. What he said at the breakfast of the friends of Religious Equality, on May 21st last, with regard to the then proposed retention of clerical Fellowships in Christ Church, Magdalen, and St. John's Colleges, was as follows:— "Now this is felt by the Liberal party, and by those

whom we ought more particularly to pity, the Liberal members in those Colleges, who are going to be handed over, bound hand and foot, to the mercies [not '*tender* mercies' as I accidentally wrote] of a clerical majority, to be a grievous wrong." Mr. Bryce thinks these words a fair representation of the probable state of a College in which the clerical Fellows happened to be in the majority. He explains them to mean "that a clerical majority might probably, with the best intentions, deal arbitrarily with a lay minority; might, for instance, exclude lay tutors from the teaching of such subjects as theology, ecclesiastical history, and even moral philosophy."—(Letter of Dec. 6.)

But, even as so explained, I think that he would have been wiser in not using such words before an assemblage of leading Nonconformists, who knew him to be (as he deservedly is) a person of importance in Oxford, the Fellow of a College, and the head of one of our ancient Faculties. I do not think that arbitrary exclusion from teaching, even with the best motives, has been in the past characteristic of clerical majorities in our Colleges. As to the *tone* of my remark, I may be forgiven if I thought he could be hardly serious in asking pity for those who always seem so strong and vigorous, and so able to take care of themselves, as the Liberal Fellows of Colleges. Nor could those who think as I do have any pleasure in supposing themselves to be objects of apprehension to their brother Fellows. Such fears, such expectations of party strife, are no satisfactory basis for the work of an educational body, which, above all other things, ought to exhibit a strong and united authority. In fact, in this whole controversy, I regret nothing

more than to see the interests of our chief business subordinated to the prevalence of an ideal drawn from the party government of the House of Commons. But since Mr. Bryce was in sober earnest in asking for this pity, I can only express my regret that he does not carry the repudiation of the sentiments ascribed to him on p. 5 as far as I could wish.

On p. 17 I quote some further words from the newspaper-report to be found in the supplement to the *Nonconformist* of May 27, and in the *Guardian* of June 2, p. 707. Professor Bryce informs me that these words were incorrectly reported. He also informs me that his attention was drawn to the report in the *Guardian*, some little time after it appeared, by a friend in Oxford; but that he did not think his utterances sufficiently important in the eyes of the public to make it worth while to correct the mistake. He does not, therefore, in any way blame me for the misquotation, but he asks me now to give him the opportunity of correcting what is there set down, as my letter has given increased currency to his words, and I am, of course, very glad to do so. He writes that what he really said was, as far as he can remember:—

"I will not go so far as to hold, as some do hold, that it ought to be, if not a positive disqualification, at any rate a disadvantage to a man who stands for a chair of that kind [Ecclesiastical History] to be a clergyman of any religious body." I do not exactly know how to interpret the "applause" which is reported to have followed. Probably the audience, like the reporter, did not quite catch his meaning, especially if his utterance was rapid. Perhaps, too, the printed report referred to on p. 5 may have been

equally inaccurate. The omission or insertion of a "not" makes a good deal of difference, but it is not an uncommon source of error.

On p. 18, I attribute to him "a desire for the exclusion of clergymen" from at least one Professorship, which he tells me he has never expressed. My reason for supposing it to be his wish, was partly the sentence quoted on p. 17, which I now learn was misreported, partly what he went on to say; viz. "the subject of Church history is one of so much importance and so much difficulty, requiring a mind so absolutely fair and impartial, that it would be more safely entrusted to a learned and judicious layman, than to any clergyman whatever, and I therefore hope that some action will be taken to open these professorships to laymen." I gather, then, that he does not wish clergymen to be *ineligible by statute* to this Chair, but that he desires laymen to be appointed; and that if he had a vote, or was asked for his advice on the subject of an appointment, a layman would always have the preference, unless the clerical candidate was undeniably superior. And I understood him to use the word "layman" in the widest sense.

My other critic, Mr. Ingram Bywater of Exeter College, objects to my summary description of his College on p. 22, as intended to be a College of priests. The question between us is here chiefly an antiquarian one, on which, for my own part, I should be glad of more light. Two things should be said about it, for the sake of those who are not familiar with the history of the College:—

1. That the "foundation statutes," which I suppose to bear out my assertion, are not those of Sta-

peldon Hall, commonly called Exeter College, in 1316; but the statutes of 1566, re-founding the society on a larger scale, contemporaneously with large additional benefactions. The first society consisted of thirteen scholars, one of whom was to be elected Rector, while another was to be their Chaplain in priest's orders. None of them were to remain in the house after the completion of three years from his Master's degree, (*Statutes of Exeter College, printed by desire of the Commissioners*, 1855, p. 10). They were therefore all comparatively young men, while those of the later foundation might remain for life. It may be supposed then that the relation between the two bodies was not very unlike that of Magdalen Hall to Hertford College, the members, buildings, and property of which passed to the later foundation; and that the lustre of Sir William Petre's foundation has been reflected back upon a society which would otherwise have been less known to the world. And though Exeter College, with a natural and rightful pride, dates its origin from 1316, its members could hardly find fault with any one who considered the statutes of 1566 as the institution of the present society, though they incorporate many provisions of the earlier code. I did not, however, make any statement on this head, nor is it necessary for my argument to do so now.

2. In the statutes signed by the Bishop of Exeter and Sir William Petre (p. 39) occurs the following provision, that all perpetual scholars (answering to our Fellows), after taking the Master's degree, and after the necessary period of their regency, "statim ad sacram theologiam se divertant, ei tam diligenter operam dantes, ut decimo post completam

regentiam anno, promoveantur ad gradum Baccalaurei, ac deinde ante octavum annum completum post gradum Baccalaureatus ad ipsum Doctoratus sacræ Theologiæ gradum actualiter promoveantur."

There can therefore be no question that the study of theology by all Scholars (or Fellows) was one of the principal intentions of the founders of 1566. Whether they intended all these Scholars to be eventually in holy orders, depends upon the idea and meaning then attached to Divinity degrees. What is known for certain is:—(1) that a Sermon at St. Mary's was required of all students in Divinity as one of the exercises for their degree, (Anstey's *Munimenta Academica*, p. 392 etc.): and (2), that the Laudian Statutes of 1634 prescribe that the B.D., as well as every other University preacher, shall be "sacris ordinibus initiatus," i.e. at least in deacon's orders. (*Statutes of* 1634, Tit. vi. sect. 6; Tit. xvi. § 6.) The statutable requirements of Queen Elizabeth's reign as to ordination are less known as regards Oxford. At Cambridge, as I learn from my brother, regulations like those of the Laudian Statutes were promulgated as early as 1549, and repeated in 1559 and 1570. I gather, then, that the definite connection of ordination with Divinity degrees was part of the Reformation policy of Edward VI.th's and Queen Elizabeth's reigns; and it is a fair inference that the Laudian Statutes were a declaration of existing custom (if not of statutable requirement) among us. Mr. Boase, (the learned historian of Exeter College) has indeed discovered instances after the Reformation, of B.D.'s not in holy orders. But these may be fairly accounted for by supposing that they had received dispensations from their ex-

ercises, perhaps from the Vice-Chancellor, who at one time, at any rate, had the right to grant such a privilege annually. I consider, then, that the *intention* of the Bishop of Exeter and Sir William Petre, was to furnish the reformed Church of England with a learned clergy. The Society founded by them was not indeed, *in the strictest sense*, a College of Priests, inasmuch as the younger members of it were not in holy orders—and this was also the case at Brasenose. But in both, the Fellows who continued in the course marked out for them *by their founders' intentions*, were, to the best of my belief, in due course ordained, first as Deacons, and then as Priests. I need hardly remark, that in the reformed Church of England the diaconate has hardly been considered a substantive grade of the ministry, but rather a preliminary to the priesthood. (Cp. the Collect at the end of the *Ordering of Deacons*.)

That this was my meaning was probably pretty clear to most of my readers. Exeter College, as far as the intent of its second foundation is concerned, and as far as it consisted of M.A.'s, is, however, more exactly described as a College of theological students, either in holy orders, or presumably in training for holy orders. This description will, I hope, give more satisfaction to the accurate mind of Mr. Bywater, than that which I used in my first letter. It is due at any rate to him, and to the Fellows of Exeter College who think with him, to state exactly how the case stands—even though it is now, unfortunately, little more than a matter of antiquarian interest. Theology at Exeter College is, it seems, as far as its Fellowships go, to be reduced to the meagre provision of Walter Stapeldon,

in 1316, and to be represented by one Chaplain-Fellow. Provision is indeed made that as long as the incumbency of Kidlington is attached to the Rectorship, the Rector should be in holy orders. There are also other just provisions for assistance to the Chaplain, for religious teaching of undergraduates, for the religious welfare of the servants, for sermons in the Chapel, and for Hebrew lectures out of it. But I regret much to observe no special enactment for carrying out the intentions of 1566, as most rigorously interpreted, by theological (if not clerical) Fellowships, such as appears very wisely in the statutes proposed for Magdalen College (p. 8), unsatisfactory as they are in some respects. Exeter College is, however, no worse in this matter than its neighbours, many of whom seem entirely to have forgotten the root from which they sprang.

I might comment at length on the other statutes recently printed by the Commissioners, but I cannot do so now. I trust that they will all be subjected to a searching criticism. My impression on reading them is best summed up, perhaps, by a sentiment akin to one let fall in your speech, though in a different sense. It is a great pity that such important questions as the future destiny of each College should have been practically determined by the votes of casual majorities of the present governing bodies. This is well known to have been the case to a very great extent, and a careful reader can trace this influence in page after page of the proposed statutes.

Believe me to be, dear Mr. Roundell,

Very faithfully yours,

JOHN WORDSWORTH.